

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /076 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4509

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, KN, KS

SUBJECT: KOREAN CONCERN OVER U.S. RELATIONS WITH DPRK

1. DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S JUNE 11 LOS ANGELES
SPEECH STATING US HOPES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH MANY COUNTRIES
INCLUDING NORHT KOREA, AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S JUNE 13
PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS TOUCHING SAME SUBJECT HAVE
OCCASIONED OMINOUS REPORTING AND SEVERAL WORRIED EDITORIALS
IN JUNE 14 SEOUL PRESS. SEMI-OFFICIAL KYUNGHYANG SHINMUN
EDITORIAL WAS MOST MODERATE, STATING RECENT SERIES OF U.S.
ACTIONS FAVORABLE TO NORTH KOREA STILL DOES NOT DEFINITELY
INDICATE USG IS ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT DPRK, THOUGH IT
DOES JUSTIFY SUSPICION. BY CONTRAST, INDEPENDENT TONGA
ILBO EDITORIAL INTERPRETED DEPUTY SECRETARY'S REMARKS
TO MEAN THAT "NOW EVEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT" -- WHICH
HAD PREVIOUSLY ALWAYS "CLARIFIED" PRESIDENT CARTER'S
STATEMENTS, STRESSING REQUIREMENT SOUTH KOREAN PARTICIPATION,
HAS DECIDED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA ARE IN
U.S. INTEREST. TONGA CONDEMNS ANY US MOVE APPEARING TO
FAVOR NORTH AS BETRAYAL OF SOUTH KOREA.

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2. IN JUNE 8 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, MOFA UN DIVISION CHIEF
YI CHONG-PIN REMARKED THAT HIS ASSOCIATES IN AND OUT OF
GOVERNMENT URGE HIM THESE DAYS TO BE WARY OF AMERICAN
DISCLAIMERS ON THIS SUBJECT AND ASK HIM WHAT STEPS ROKG WILL
TAKE TO COUNTER SUPPOSED US INITIATIVES VIS-A-VIS THE

NORTH. YI EMPHASIZED HE AND HIS MOFA COLLEAGUES CONTINUE TO URGE KOREANS TO TRUST USG.

3. WE HAVE CONTINUED OF COURSE TO TAKE SIMILAR LINE OURSELVES, CAUTIONING AGAINST EXAGGERATED CONCERNS, WHEN KOREANS RAISE THIS QUESTION. MOST RECENTLY JUNE 14 WHEN FONMIN PARK ASKED AMBASSADOR ABOUT MEANING OF DEPUTY SECRETARY'S REMARKS, AMBASSADOR ASSURED HIM THAT OUR POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA REMAINED THE SAME. THIS APPEARED TO SATISFY PARK, AND HE DID NOT PURSUE QUESTION.
SNEIDER

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